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CITY OF COLUMBUS BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS (Updated - September 25, 2012 Meeting)

STAFF REPORT

Docket No. / Project Title: C/CU-12-13 (Messiah Baptist Church)

Staff: Derek Naber

Applicant: Messiah Baptist Church

Property Size: 2.36 Acres

Zoning: AP (Agriculture: Preferred)

Location: 195 South 300 East, in Clay Township

Background Summary:

The applicant has indicated that the proposed conditional use will allow a 32 square foot permanent wall sign and a temporary banner for an existing church for a property in the AP (Agriculture: Preferred) zoning district.

Key Issue Summary:

The following key issue(s) should be resolved through the consideration of this application: None.

Preliminary Staff Recommendation:

Approval, all criteria have been met.

Zoning District Intent:

The intent of the AP (Agriculture: Preferred) zoning district is as follows: To provide an area suitable for agriculture and agriculture-related uses. This district is further intended to preserve the viability of agricultural operations, and limit non-agriculture development in areas with minimal, incompatible infrastructure.

Residential development in this zoning district is intended to be limited. In no instance shall this zoning district be considered a large-lot residential zone. This district is further intended to protect the use and value of both agricultural and non-agricultural property within the community.

Current Property Information:		
Land Use:	Church	
Site Features:	The site features a church and parking lot.	
Flood Hazards:	No flood hazards exist at this location.	
Vehicle Access:	The property gains access from 300 East (Local, Residential, Rural).	

Surrounding Zoning and Land Use:			
	Zoning:	Land Use:	
North:	AP (Agriculture: Preferred)	Farmland	
South:	AP (Agriculture: Preferred)	Farmland	
East:	AP (Agriculture: Preferred)	Farmland	
West:	I-1 (Industrial: Light)	Industrial	

History of this Location:

The relevant history of this property includes the following:

- 1. On April 4, 2001, Messiah Baptist Church was approved by City Council for a special use rezoning and site plan requests which rezoned the subject property from AG (Agriculture) to SU-1 (Special Uses Churches) (SU-01-01).
- 2. The church was approved at this location at 195 South 300 East, for a 6,242 square foot church with a parking area, freestanding sign and landscaping (SU-05-22).
- 3. In 2008, as part of the Zoning Ordinance update, the property was changed from SU-1 (Special Uses Churches) to AP (Agriculture: Preferred).
- 4. On August 14, 2012, the City of Columbus Board of Zoning Appeals Hearing Officer approved of a conditional use to allow a church parsonage for a property in the AP (Agriculture: Preferred) zoning district. The approval was subject to the following conditions:
 - The off-site temporary banner located on the industrial property to the west shall be removed, prior to the issuance of a Zoning Compliance Certificate for the parsonage.
 - The gravel parking lot details shall be provided on the site plan for the parsonage Zoning Compliance Certificate consistent with the provision of the approval of SU-05-22 (Messiah Baptist Church).
 - The new wall sign on the church shall be requested as a conditional use to the Board of Zoning Appeals.
 - A dumpster enclosure shall be provided on the site plan for the parsonage Zoning Compliance Certificate as required by Zoning Ordinance Section 6.1(C)(2) and installed prior to occupancy of the parsonage.

Planning Consideration(s):

The following general site considerations, planning concepts, and other facts should be considered in the review of this application:

- 1. Messiah Baptist Church is proposing a wall sign for the south wall of their building and a temporary banner. The 2 ft. x 16 ft. (32 square foot) permanent wall sign would provide the name of the church on the building. The church property is permitted one wall sign whose total square footage not exceed 144 square feet. The proposed wall sign is 112 square feet below the maximum total square footage. The wall sign is aimed towards US 31 in order to allow visitors or members to clearly identify the church's location which does not have direct frontage along US 31. The property currently features a 6 ft. x 8 ft. (48 square foot) permanent freestanding sign. The freestanding sign also features a changeable copy area for church related messages. The applicant has not provided any details on the size or location of any temporary banner, but has stated that the banner would meet the Zoning Ordinance requirements when it would be requested as a Zoning Compliance Certificate.
- 2. All signage for properties in any agriculture zoning district (AP, AG, AV) is only permitted through conditional use approval for uses listed as conditional within their respective zoning district. A worship facility is listed as a conditional use for a property in the AP (Agriculture: Preferred) zoning district. The Zoning Ordinance does not permit a worship facility and its associated signage outright, in order for the Board of Zoning Appeals to verify that the proposed signage is appropriately scaled to fit within a rural and agricultural setting where the AP (Agriculture: Preferred) is prominently featured.

Comprehensive Plan Consideration(s):

The Comprehensive Plan designates the future land use of properties in this area as Agriculture.

The Comprehensive Plan includes this property in the Eastern Rural character area.

Provisional Findings of Fact/Decision Criteria:

Section 12.4(D) of the Zoning Ordinance permits the Board of Zoning Appeals to allow conditional uses that meet the criteria listed below. The Board may impose reasonable conditions as part of an approval.

1. The proposal will not be injurious to the public helath, safety, and general welfare of the community.

Provisional Findings: The proposed wall sign and temporary banner will not result in a proliferation of signage or visibility issues on the church property or to the surrounding area. *This criterion has been met.*

2. The development of the property will be consistent with the intent of the development standards established by the Zoning Ordinance for similar uses.

Provisional Findings: The proposed wall sign is significantly below the maximum permitted amount of signage and the wall sign and temporary banner will not result in the proliferation of signage at the church location. *This criterion has been met.*

3. Granting the conditional use will not be contrary to the general purposes served by the Zoning Ordinance, and will not permanently injure other property or uses in the same zoning district and vicinity.

Provisional Findings: The proposed signs will fit within the rural and agricultural context of the surrounding area and not result in the proliferation of signage on the subject property. This criterion has been met.

4. The proposed use will be consistent with the character of the zoning district in which it is located and the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

Provisional Findings: The Comprehensive Plan indicates that the future land use of the subject property and surrounding area as agriculture. The proposed wall sign is below the maximum allowed wall sign square footage for a property within the AP (Agriculture: Preferred) zoning district and the sign along with the temporary banner will fit within the rural and agricultural context. This criterion has been met.

Board of Zoning Appeals Options:

In reviewing a request for <u>conditional use</u> the Board may (1) approve the petition as proposed, (2) approve the petition with conditions, (3) continue the petition to a future meeting of the Board, or (4) deny the petition (with or without prejudice). Failure to achieve a quorum or lack of a positive vote on a motion results in an automatic continuance to the next regularly scheduled meeting.